

July 8, 1997

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FROM: Gerald E. Smith

SUBJECT: **Deputy Secretary's Focus Report**

The following is a brief summary of Department of Transportation events and items of interest from the past month:

**OPERATIONAL ITEMS:**

**REDUCED BUDGET CARRY-OVER BENEFITS REGION/STATE PROGRAM**

In order to minimize budget carry forward, North Central Region has focused on expenditures and getting projects completed and paid for during the current biennium. The project engineering offices and the regional support team have accomplished an estimated delivery of 110% over the March, 1997, planned 95-97 biennial expenditures. This biennium, approximately \$44.8 million will be spent as compared to the March plan of \$40.55 million. This is an excellent delivery of construction projects and programmed dollars despite late starts due to a wet spring. An additional perspective is that 72 projects have been delivered this biennium which is 24% over the original plan of 58 projects for the region. By doing this, the regional and statewide program has been helped by reducing needed reappropriation by about \$4 million.

In the I2 Safety subprogram it appears the North Central Region will exceed the March "reapprop" plan by \$1.275 million. In the largest subprogram, P1 Paving, the region is expected to exceed the reapprop plan by about \$2 million, for about \$22.4 million of expenditures.

The Structures Preservation, P2 subprogram, has delivered the projects, and in spite of high rivers and tight work windows, may still only underspend the March plan by about \$100,000.

### **SEQUIM BYPASS PROJECT GOES TO AD**

The US 101 Sequim Bypass project was advertised for contractor's bids on June 30. The estimated \$20 million construction project will result in improved mobility by constructing new US 101 lanes south of the existing route, away from the City of Sequim's downtown business area. Three new interchanges will be built as part of the project to provide easy access to Sequim.

With planning going back over 20 years, the bypass has seen many fits and starts, so the ad date represents a major milestone. Preliminary engineering for this project began in earnest in December 1992. The project has crossed many hurdles since that time including: escalating real estate costs for the 163 parcels needed (right-of-way was originally estimated at \$11 million; current budget is \$16.8 million); unanticipated archaeological finds (described as one of the most significant sites in the state); and unexpected wetland mitigation which required redesign and realignment of the eastern portion of the project. Bids are expected to be opened in late August, with construction starting this fall.

### **MANETTE BRIDGE REPLACEMENT ALTERNATIVE APPROVED**

After several public meetings and Bremerton City Council study sessions, resulted in a recommended replacement alternative for the state-owned and maintained Manette Bridge in Bremerton being was approved by the city council during its June 25 meeting. The Manette Bridge is in an advanced state of deterioration and is not expected to stay open for more than 10 years. Olympic Region's Transportation Planning Office has worked extensively with City of Bremerton staff to solicit community input and develop a recommended replacement alternative. The replacement bridge will be constructed south of and adjacent to the existing bridge, and will tie in with the existing street system. The bridge will include two 12-foot travel lanes, two 5-foot bicycle lanes/shoulders, and two 6-foot sidewalks.

### **I-90/EVERGREEN INTERCHANGE NEARLY DESIGNED**

WSDOT Eastern Region engineers are in the final stages of designing the I-90/Evergreen Interchange project in the Spokane Valley. Funding is still an issue. WSDOT is providing the engineering & design services as their contribution to the partnership. Spokane County is using funds from the Transportation Improvement Board and the County's match. Cash involvement from the developers is still not secured although they have contributed \$900,000 in right-of-way for the project (WSDOT has contributed \$800,000 in right-of-way with Spokane County providing land worth \$100,000). The developers' regional shopping mall officially opens on August 13. It is anticipated that the mall traffic will overwhelm the adjacent SR 90/Pines and Sullivan interchanges at that time.

### **MATS LAB APPROVED FOR RE-ACCREDITATION**

AASHTO has just informed Denny Jackson, State Materials Engineer, that the WSDOT Materials Lab has been approved for re-accreditation for American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) and AASHTO tests within the following groups: Asphalt Cement/Cutback Asphalt, Emulsified Asphalt, Hot-Mix Asphalt, Hot-Mix Asphalt Aggregate, Soil, Portland Cement Concrete, Portland Cement Concrete Aggregate, Hydraulic Cement (Physical Tests), Hydraulic Cement and Chemical Tests.

This means that the Materials Lab has demonstrated proficiency in the tests and has met the requirements set forth by the AASHTO Subcommittee on Materials. The re-accreditation is due to the great efforts of many staff and demonstrates their excellent knowledge. It is also a key to the department receiving federal highway dollars.

#### **SAFETY OFFICE ACCESSING REGULATIONS ON CD-ROM**

WSDOT's Safety Office has purchased unlimited usage rights of several regulations on CD-ROM. They include: Reg-trieve with CFR 29 OSHA, IOSHA letters of interpretation for OSHA, CFR 40 EPA, CFR 49 DOT, Training and Federal Register, CFR 33 and 46 Coast Guard, Washington State Safety and Health regulations, Washington State Environmental Regulations, and the North American Emergency Response Guide. The regulations will be updated quarterly. Copies will be shared with all safety offices and environmental sections. The Safety Office is exploring the possibility of access by other offices through the WSDOT Home Page.

#### **WSDOT CONTRACT AD & AWARDS**

May 1997 bids were opened on seven preservation projects for a total of seven new contracts. The total engineer's estimate was \$26,915,049.67, with total bids of \$23,129,729.49, or 14.06% percent below the estimate. There were 276 uncompleted contracts with a total work-in-progress dollar value of \$1,138,014,180.71.

#### **WSDOT MAINTENANCE FORMS NEW TASK FORCE**

A Maintenance Management System Task Force was formed with the initial meeting of the group held on June 25. This team was formed to follow-up the recommendation from the Maintenance Management and Administration Evaluation completed by the Dye Management Group a year ago. The Dye Study recommended that WSDOT purchase and implement maintenance management software and develop an inventory of infrastructure. The team is made up of region and area maintenance managers and is charged with evaluating WSDOT's needs for a functional maintenance management system and inventory system before an investment in any software or hardware is made. The initial meeting involved identifying the customer supplier chain of maintenance information and brainstorming customer/supplier gaps of the present system.

#### **FERRY AUDIT TO BE COMPLETE BY 1998**

The Advisory Committee for the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee (JLARC) have met twice. They have agreed to complete the ferry portion of the audit by February of 1998 with two exceptions. The review of the long range plan will be broken into two phases. During the first year the focus will be on the building blocks of an appropriate long range capital and operating plan. In essence, have we an adequate knowledge basis from which to plan. The second year will look at the substance of the plan itself. The question of adequate internal controls for payroll, inventory, and revenue have been deferred to the state auditor. It is expected a contract will be out and the consultant on site during October.

#### **PROJECTS FOR BAINBRIDGE ISLAND TERMINAL MOVING FORWARD**

Washington State Ferries (WSF) continues to work on multiple projects for the Bainbridge Island terminal. Portions of the City's Master Plan that address the 20 to 30 year plan for the terminal are complete. The committee appointed to review WSF's work has essentially concluded their efforts by identifying issues and making recommendations. This was forwarded to the next reviewing body, the Bainbridge Island Planning Commission. WSF reached a partial agreement on issues concerning impacts to local access that would result from proposed expansion of our vehicle holding area. WSF was allowed to carry two alternatives for further study and additional public comment. One other open ended issue is the character of the Winslow Way/SR 305 intersection. WSF developed additional alternatives for review. The city's Planning Commission has concerns over the past planning efforts and the assignment of the third boat to the Seattle-Bainbridge route. They expressed serious concern about the parameters of the current planning study and question its assumptions.

### **LIBERTY COURT APARTMENTS SCHEDULED FOR DEMOLITION**

The new bridge and roadway access to the Vancouver Lake area requires the acquisition and removal of the Liberty Court Apartments. The property has been purchased by the City of Vancouver and the tenants are currently being relocated. Of 80 total units, three remain occupied. The last tenants are scheduled to be relocated by the middle of July.

During the summer months, prior to demolition, a number of emergency service agencies (police, fire, Red Cross, and Search & Rescue) will be utilizing the facilities for training exercises. The Vancouver Fire Department will conduct training exercises by demolishing the existing wooden structure with a controlled fire. The anticipated schedule is after the rains begin in early fall. Prior to training, the lead based paint and asbestos materials will be removed.

### **WATER BORNE PAINT EFFECTIVE & GOOD TO THE ENVIRONMENT**

The United States Congress passed new environmental laws in the late 1980's stating that VOC's (Volatile Organic Compounds) or ozone depleting compounds must be cut to help the environment. Talk continued about this in the early to mid 1990's. In order to contribute to this environmentally conscious movement, WSDOT's SW Region striping supervisor volunteered to try water borne paint at the 1995 striping meeting. That same year the department made a commitment to convert the SW Region's striper over to be able to apply water borne paint.

After the striper conversion, the region striping crew encountered problems but worked through them. They also pushed the limits of the products to find failure points. As it turns out, the new water borne paint has better longevity on the road than the old solvent based paint. This means better reflectivity and it lasts longer on the road. The SW Region was pro-active and took a risk to try a new product and found it is safer to use, better for the environment, lasts longer, and has better night time reflectivity.

### **APPROVAL RECOMMENDED FOR LOCAL MUTUAL AID AGREEMENT**

The city and county engineering associations have recommended approval of the Public Works Emergency Response Mutual Aid Agreement.

Early next month, a letter of transmittal, co-signed by Denny Ingham, Stan Finkelstein of the Association of Washington Cities, and Eric Berger of the County Road Administration Board (CRAB), will be formally sent to cities and counties for adoption. The transmittal package will also include an Introduction and a Reference Guide for the agreement. Cities and counties will then submit the agreement to their county commission or city council for adoption.

This mutual aid agreement makes it possible for local jurisdictions to provide each other "immediate assistance to protect life and property" when an emergency is proclaimed "by the local and/or state government approving authority." An emergency such as the ice storms of December 1996 is an example in which local mutual aid could be activated.

TransAid will establish information on its Internet Home Page giving the status of agencies' approvals of this agreement as well as background information about it. Hard copies of new signatory agencies will also be periodically transmitted to all signatory agencies.

#### **SR 16/TACOMA NARROWS LIST OF THREE ALTERNATIVES ADVANCE**

WSDOT has completed the Major Investment Study and recommends three alternative solutions be advanced into the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) phase of the project. The alternatives are: 1) SR 16 Corridor Improvements with a New Parallel Bridge; 2) SR 16 Corridor Improvements with a Double Deck on the Existing Bridge; 3) No Action.

A wide range of studies are in progress on these three alternatives. The Environmental Impact Statement identifies potential environmental impacts as required by State Environmental Policy Act/National Environmental Policy Act (SEPA/NEPA). A number of operational issues (e.g. High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) vs. Single Occupancy Vehicle (SOV) lanes, toll collection) pertaining to each alternative will be explored. The demand and need for transit services and facilities will also be defined. Preliminary engineering and geotechnical studies are underway. These studies will lead to the identification of a preferred alternative solution for improving safety and congestion on SR 16/Tacoma Narrows. The Draft EIS is scheduled to be complete in June, 1998 with public hearings scheduled for July, 1998.

Public involvement activities are continuing in the corridor with the operation of a toll free information line, Internet web site, project information office, presentations and quarterly newsletters.

In conjunction with the Major Investment Study, a preliminary financial feasibility analysis was conducted on the proposed build alternatives. Preliminary cost estimates

indicate that both the new parallel span and the double deck alternatives, including the HOV lanes on SR 16 from Cedar Street to Purdy, to be in the \$385-\$412 million range.

In order to keep the toll for a round trip in the \$3.00 range, state and federal funding assistance is being sought. State financial assistance might take the form of certain tax exemptions and state funding commitments for the SR 16 HOV lanes, which are part of the approved regional HOV core lane program. Federal demonstration funds have also been requested by Congressman Norm Dicks for the project.

At a hearing on June 26, WSDOT adopted amendments to WAC 468-105 pertaining to the public advisory election. The amendments were proposed to bring the agency rule into compliance with 1996 legislative amendments embodied in SSB 6753.

Traffic and economic studies are also underway which will result in a proposed preliminary geographic boundary of the area impacted by the imposition of tolls. Residents who live within this boundary will be eligible to participate in an advisory election scheduled for November, 1998. An initial affected project area boundary is scheduled to be complete in September, 1997. A Local Involvement Committee (LIC) comprised of elected officials from the city and county jurisdictions within the boundary, appointed by their respective jurisdictions will form this fall. County officials will also be appointing two members each of groups formed to support and oppose the proposed project. The Governor may also appoint four members from statewide transportation organizations. The LIC is created by state law to provide advice to WSDOT on matters related to the advisory election. Following a fall public comment period and public briefings, the LIC will make a recommendation pertaining to the affected project area boundary, prior to WSDOT establishing the final boundary.

#### **WSDOT RECEIVES DESIGNER TRAINING**

AGA Computer Services, Inc., completed CAiCE (Computer Aided Civil Engineering) training for CAE coordinators at the end of January 1997. CAE coordinators have been developing a curriculum in order to deliver training to WSDOT designers. The bulk of designer training will start after July 1, 1997. Several regions including Eastern, Olympic, Southwest, and North Central contracted with AGA and have completed training for a limited number of designers. CAE Support Team staff completed the first training session for consultants in May 1997 (conducted in the Northwest Region).

#### **WSDOT & CELLULAR TELECOMMUNICATIONS TEAM UP**

The Design and Real Estate Service Branches of WSDOT's Environmental & Engineering Service Center, and the Olympic and Northwest Regions are working with the cellular telecommunications industry to improve the processing, review and issuance of cellular telecommunications air-space leases. The task force efforts will lead to new cellular site

guidelines, lease documents, and a better understanding of the WSDOT's and cellular provider's needs.

### **DESIGN VISUALIZATION DEVELOPING NARROWS BRIDGE MODELS**

WSDOT's Design Visualization staff are currently developing models for the Tacoma Narrows Bridge crossing. Models include a parallel suspension bridge, a parallel cable stay bridge, and an underdeck option on the existing structure. Sixteen photographs will be produced showing different alternatives. These products are being developed for the EIS study being done by United Infrastructure. Deadline for the design visualization is the end of July.

### **WSF TO RECEIVE A "GOOD" AUDIT REPORT**

WSDOT Audit staff participated in the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) Triennial Review of the Washington State Ferries (WSF). Per the FTA's contracted auditor's comments at their exit conference, the WSF will receive a "good" audit report. Areas of non-compliance involved Section 15 reporting (need exemption letter on file for WSF) and the drug and alcohol plan (records retention problem). Due to scheduling difficulties, the civil rights part of this review is still open and will be discussed with the WSDOT's Office of Equal Opportunity on August 11, 1997 as part of the FTA's State Management Review.

A status report was presented to WSF executive management regarding their corrective action plan to the State Auditor's Office (SAO) FY96 audit report. The WSF continues to make progress resolving the conditions leading to SAO's audit findings.

### **TECHNICAL TRAINING GIVEN IN CORRIDOR MANAGEMENT PLANNING**

During the busy month of June, the Heritage Corridors Program conducted a series of outreach technical training sessions for local citizens' groups interested in developing and implementing Corridor Management Planning documents. Funding was secured through the National Scenic Byways Grant application process.

- The first technical training session was held in Cle Elum for the SR 10 Upper Kittitas County Corridor Group in Cle Elum Washington. The one-day workshop focused on helping the group develop tools and strategies for a Corridor management Plan that is built on community driven ideas, incorporating the wishes and needs of the public along with a solid inventory and assessment of the Corridor.
- The second technical training session was held on June 12, 1997 in Metaline Falls. The technical training was a great success and opened doors of communication with concerned citizens. A follow-up meeting was held on Friday, June 13 with the Steering Committee and consultant to go over the scope of work for the corridor management plan which has just gotten underway.
- The third technical training session was held in Enumclaw to provide technical assistance to the citizens' group which is developing a corridor management plan (CMP) for SR 410. Prior to the training, a meeting was convened between members

of the Routes Steering Committee, WSDOT, and the National Park Service to discuss local interest in nominating the Mather Memorial Parkway (the portion of SR 410 within Mt. Rainier National Park) as a National Scenic Byway.

### **MOTOR FUEL TAX REVENUE FORECASTS ADOPTED**

The June 1997 motor fuel tax revenue forecast and forecasts of revenue from motor vehicle licenses, permits, and fees were presented to and adopted by the Interagency Revenue Task Force. The forecast of fuel tax revenue available for distribution during the next two biennia is lower when compared to the March forecast. Higher gasoline prices and higher passenger car fuel efficiency are reducing the forecast. In addition, the actual motor fuel tax collections for March, April, and May 1997 were below the March 1997 forecast by approximately \$3 million. As a result of these changes, the forecast for the 97-99 Biennium was reduced by 0.3 percent and the forecast for the 99-2001 Biennium was reduced 1.3 percent, when compared to the March 1997 forecast. The new forecast for trucks licensed by gross weight that produce licenses, permits, and fees are 1.6 percent lower in 97-99 and 2 percent lower in 99-2001 compared to the March forecast.

### **GEOGRAPHIC SERVICES CELEBRATING A PRODUCTIVE YEAR**

The Geographic Services Survey Section has been busy capping off a very productive year ending this biennium with the following highlights:

- Staff occupied a total of 816 monuments in 1997, and are in the process of producing 544 new horizontal control monuments.
- A total of 186 high accuracy elevation control bench marks were established, representing approximately 1600 miles walked by Survey's leveling crew.
- Survey completed 211 projects in this 95-97 biennium, as compared with 135 projects in the 93-95 biennium (76 project increase).
- Survey participated with other geodetic surveyors across the nation in a three-day measurement blitz. Five new High Precision Stations resulted, with measurements used from a new national network. The Survey Unit also provided leadership in forming a public-private partnership in the establishment of two new High Precision Stations in Clallam County.

### **MONTHLY WSDOT GRAIN TRAIN PERFORMANCE REPORT**

Total carloads shipped for April	26	
Total carloads shipped January through April		149*

#### **Grain Train Revolving Fund:**

Beginning Balance -	\$307,949.42
Current Month Revenues -	\$11,852.58
Current Month Expenses -	( \$0.00)



Ending Balance -

\$319,802.00

\*149 rail cars of grain is equivalent to approximately 425 truckloads.

### **CTR STAFF WORKS TO RESOLVE NON-COMPLIANCE ISSUES**

WSDOT Commute Trip Reduction (CTR) staff met with the Director of Community Development for the City of Des Moines to discuss the city's failure to comply with state CTR program requirements. The city has not conducted the required employee commute surveys, reviewed and approved employer CTR programs, conducted a review of jurisdiction parking policies, or entered into an interlocal agreement with King County to receive and spend state CTR funds administered by WSDOT. At the meeting, WSDOT staff presented a plan developed in conjunction with the King County Department of Transportation whereby King County would assume administration of the Des Moines CTR program, and would be responsible for providing technical support and services to the affected employers in the city. Under the plan, the city would be required only to fulfill its obligations as a CTR-affected worksite. The city's initial reaction to the plan was favorable, and if the city manager and council approve the necessary intergovernmental agreement with King County, the city should return to compliance with the CTR law shortly.

### **FREEWAY HOV POLICY REPRINT READY FOR DISTRIBUTION**

The department's High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) policy document, *Washington State Freeway HOV System Policy-Executive Summary*, was last printed in November 1992. This may be the only HOV policy document of its kind in North America, and consequently WSDOT receives many requests for it. Requests were being met by sending photocopies of the last remaining document. In addition to the inconvenience of having run out of hard copy, the executive summary contained various sections that had become outdated did not reflect industry and department advancements since 1992. Most important was assuring that the department included the new HOV policy process developed by the Transportation Commission in 1996. The idea was to clarify, not change the intent or purpose of policy as originally written. After final HCT/HOV Policy Board approval, the improved document was submitted to Graphics. With the expert help of Service Center Publications Support, the job was completed on time. The reprint is now available for distribution.

### **HERO PROGRAM FUNDING BACK ON TRACK THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS**

After a year of exploring options to fund the HERO Program, negotiations with transit has secured program funding for the 1997-99 biennium. HERO provides Puget Sound region motorist's a safe and effective means of reporting High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lane violators. In past years, the program had received discretionary funding support from the department and Metro Transit, however, in 1996 budget tightening in both agencies eliminated traditional funding sources. Actions to fund the program included a

campaign to raise awareness of the program within the Puget Sound transportation community, successful inclusion of HERO funding in the Agency Request Budget, an effort to prioritize high enough for oil rebate competitive grant funding, and an attempt to qualify for High Capacity Transportation Account planning funds. None of these options were fruitful and in the end success came from going to program benefactors and requesting contributions. A deal was made whereby transit, King County Metro, Community Transit, and Pierce Transit will pay 25 percent and the department will pay 75 percent of program costs. The Environmental and Engineering Service Center Traffic Office and Public Transportation and Rail Division are supporting HERO for WSDOT. This deal represents the first partnerships with transit agencies other than Metro for HERO funding. By June 30, 1997, parties had signed the contract agreement which provides program administration, management, and funding through June 30, 1999.

### **OEO INVOLVED WITH FTA REVIEW OF FERRIES**

WSDOT's Office of Equal Opportunity (OEO) participated in the recent Federal Transit Authority (FTA) review of the WSF programs via telephone conference. The review was coordinated by Steve Queen, Capital Programs Assistant Manager for WSF. FTA had a laundry list of questions regarding the civil rights components: Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE), Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) programs for contractors as well as some questions regarding equal employment opportunities for WSF employees. At the end of the conference call, the FTA expressed some concerns about WSF's preparedness for the review.

Mr. Queen apologized to OEO staff for the short notice he provided and discussed how the two offices can better coordinate in the future. OEO was also informed that FTA has scheduled a "Washington State Management Review" for WSDOT on August 11, where they will go over the EEO related areas for WSF then, too. FTA will be contacting OEO for assistance on the civil rights programs for WSDOT.

### **TRANSPORTATION BOND PROCEEDS GO TOWARD PROJECTS**

Financial planning staff attended the State Finance Committee Meeting on June 24 in support of the department's request to sell \$28 million worth of transportation bonds. The bond issue was awarded to Seafirst whose bid had a true interest cost equal to 5.334857%. Proceeds from the sale of these bonds will be used to support special category C projects, emergency highway projects, and public-private initiative projects. Financial Planning staff have also been monitoring the daily ending cash balances for the transportation funds in preparation for June 30 and are also in the process of incorporating the June 1997 Interagency Revenue Forecast into the six year financial plan.

### **QUALITY ITEMS:**

### **PRESENTATION OF "SRVIEW" SPURS LOCAL AGENCY IDEAS**

Following the presentation of TransAid's new, local version of SRView at the Association of Counties Conference in Spokane this month, ideas are being developed on new ways the counties could use the program.

As reported last month, SRView is a computer-based "video logging" technique developed for WSDOT by the Transportation Data Office (TDO). It is currently used to view all state routes.

Some of the possibilities that local agencies saw immediately for use include:

- Tying it to the Emergency 911 system so that dispatchers could actually *see* the location and building where the emergency is reported, and guide emergency medical technicians (EMT's) to the site more quickly.
- For a visual record to supplement the stockpile inventory. This could be particularly productive if coupled to a laser range finder. Then, stockpile measurements could be done by one person and provide a visual record of supplies on hand. Currently, measuring maintenance stockpiles such as sand and aggregate require two FTE's and several hours' work per stockpile site.
- For a visual inventory of storm drainage facilities and structures.
- To respond to public concerns about the infrastructure (streets, sidewalks, etc.) with video instead of citing contracts or other supporting documents that mean little to the public. For example, when a street is resurfaced and the public feels that the resurfaced road is narrower than the old road, SRView can confirm that the road is, in fact, the same width.

### **OFFICE CONSOLIDATION WON'T GO FORWARD**

WSDOT's Office of Equal Opportunity (OEO) and Office of Human Resource (OHR) Consolidation Team has finalized their review of whether or not OHR and OEO should be consolidated to improve customer service. The final recommendation is not to consolidate the two offices. Although this was the overall recommendation, the team noted several areas where services could be improved.

### **COMMUNICATION A PRIORITY FOR EASTERN REGION OEO**

The Eastern Region OEO is in the process of developing a monthly newsletter called "In Touch". The name was chosen by the region's newly appointed Affirmative Action Officer, Anita Aguigui, to depict her effort to stay in touch with the rest of the region.

The objective is to use it as an on-going tool for communication between herself and the region as a whole.

One other program Ms. Aguigui intends to get off the ground, once the research is done and community contacts are made, is the Diversity Recruitment Committee (DRC). This is a golden opportunity for WSDOT to interact with the community on a regular basis, build relations with them in a positive light, destroy negative stereotypes and add to recruitment efforts in such a way that will help diversify our workforce.

#### **JUNK MAIL REDUCTION KEEPING MAIL ROOM EFFICIENT**

After a 3-month period for monitoring WSDOT "junk" mail, the Mail Center has reduced business bulk mail (junk mail) from three tubs to one 10-inch tub. This is a significant decrease and to accomplish this reduction, the Mail Center simply stamped any incorrectly addressed 2nd, 3rd or 4th Class mail received in the Mail Center with **"WSDOT incorrectly addressed mail - please notify sender of your correct PO Box number and zip code."** All incorrectly addressed mail is now returned to the individuals or offices asking them to use the change of address cards which are mailed to the companies for correction of address and change or deletion of the name of the business.

#### **WSDOT'S PURCHASING QUALITY TEAMS CONCLUDE YEAR LONG EFFORTS**

WSDOT's Purchasing and Inventory Manager and the Purchasing Improvement Quality Team concluded team activities in a final team celebration at Washington State Ferries in May, 1997. Using the Q2000 Quality Blueprint, the multi-agency team consisting of WSDOT and General Administration members wrapped up their hard work with the following accomplishments: 1) modified the "add-on" or "tag on" language for purchase requisitions and one-time purchases under delegated authority to permit greater flexibility and greater quantity purchases based on the original purchase document; 2) gained a better understanding of the benefits of state mandatory contracts and now have a better concept of when WSDOT may use three exceptions to go off such contracts; 3) simplified the "Best Buy" process to permit after-the-fact Best Buy Reports instead of requiring permission from OSP first; and 4) having the \$800 Direct Buy Limit for telephone quotes examined through a multi-agency committee to gain 1998 legislative support to increase the limitation to a higher dollar level.

Meanwhile, the WSDOT Purchasing Officer and Purchasing Contracts Improvements Quality Team wrapped up 15 months of team effort in June. The team consisted of WSDOT and General Administration members. The team followed the Q2000 Quality Blueprint and recorded the following accomplishments: 1) the team recommends new state contracts be in place 60 days prior to the earliest anticipated customer need date; 2) developed a WSDOT customer satisfaction survey that was mailed to 200 customers resulting in considerable support for team recommendation #1 and additional useful customer comments that may lead to contract improvements; 3) developed a brand new first page for state contracts to make it faster and easier for customers to find valuable key contract information. General Administration will test the new first page to assure it will benefit customers statewide.

#### **GOOD NEWS ITEMS:**

#### **EXCELLENT SAFETY ON THE JOB A REASON TO CELEBRATE**

Robison Construction Inc, prime contractor for the South DuPont Interchange project on Interstate 5, has achieved 100,000 hours of accident-free work [at the site](#) and celebrated that milestone with [its subcontractors and](#) WSDOT and Weyerhaeuser employees [by serving a lunchtime BBQ](#) at Northwest Landing on Friday, June 27. [All involved are especially proud of having an excellent safety record on this fast-paced job.](#)

#### **AVIATION STAFF ESCORT ART CONTEST WINNERS**

Two members of the Aviation Division staff accompanied the State winners of the International Aviation Art Contest to Olympia for a tour of the Capitol and a visit with Governor Locke. The Governor congratulated the winners and their families for their participation in the contest which is sponsored annually by the National Association of State Aviation Officials and administered in Washington State by the WSDOT Aviation Division.

#### **COMMUNITY RECEIVES IMPROVED AIRPORT**

On the 14th of June, a ceremony was held at Mansfield to dedicate the community's airport which was resurfaced and marked through a \$76,453.00 grant from the WSDOT Aviation Division. Mac McIver of the Aviation Division Staff represented the state at the dedication.

#### **GROWTH MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP HOSTED BY AVIATION**

Aviation Division planning staff conducted an afternoon workshop for growth management planners in the Department of Community Trade and Economic Development. The thrust of the workshop was the implementation of SB 6422 through a partnership between DCTED and the WSDOT-Aviation Division. The two agencies are coordinating efforts to foster compatible land use planning adjacent to airports.

#### **WSDOT STAFF RECOGNIZED FOR LIGHTWEIGHT FILLS**

WSDOT's Geotech Branch staff Tony Allen, Al Killian, and Christine Ferry were recently recognized by the FHWA for their good work in developing guidelines for the design and construction of lightweight fills.

WSDOT procedures for the use of wood fiber fill have also been included in recommendations recently published internationally in both French and English by the Permanent International Association of Road Congresses (PIARC). The primary goal of PIARC is to disseminate examples of good engineering practice which can be used by emerging nations to independently develop national guidelines. PIARC distributes its publications to members in 113 countries in as many as seven languages.

#### **WSDOT SHINES IN CUSTOMER SERVICE**

On Tuesday June 24, 1997, WSDOT Maintenance Technician Dwight Finch was sent out to cut brush to improve vehicle sight distance in Long Beach at the intersection of S.R.103 and 45th. St. Because some of the brush he was going to cut was off the right-of-way he made contact with the property owner Mrs. Dundore. He talked to her about the problem and then did the work. Later that afternoon Mrs. Dundore called to let Maintenance Supervisor, Herb Messick, know how very pleased she was with Dwight and the way he handled himself. She said he was very professional, courteous, and helpful. It was the most pleasant dealing she has had with a government employee and wanted to pass this on to his employer. She was very pleased with the work that he did

cutting the brush. It was neatly done. He cleaned up after he was finished and left no mess. Now this is customer service!

### **WSDOT GRANTED SIB PILOT STATE DESIGNATION**

On June 17, the department received formal notification that it had been selected as a State Infrastructure Bank (SIB) Pilot state under the provisions of the National Highway System Designation Act and the FFY 1997 USDOT Appropriations Act. In addition to receiving designation, the Department was awarded \$1,500,000 in federal SIB capitalization funds from the \$150,000,000 in available federal funds. With the designation, staff in Transportation Economic Partnerships (TEP) and Finance & Administration have begun to develop a work plan to implement the SIB. Among the first steps will be the execution of a Cooperative Agreement between Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration and WSDOT in order to obligate the available funds. Interest in possible use of the SIB for projects has already surfaced, TEP staff is discussing the bank with Rail Division staff about the possible use of the SIB for King Street Station improvements.

### **TDM RESOURCE CENTER RECEIVES ANOTHER ISTEA GRANT**

In the Puget Sound Regional Council's project selection process for 1999 and 2000 ISTEA funds, the TDM Resource Center was chosen to receive an additional \$500,000. This will permit the center to carry on with its activities that support and stimulate TDM. These funds, along with some other federal funds that are "in the pipeline" for the center, are pending a new federal transportation budget and the reauthorization of ISTEA.

### **NEW WASHINGTON STATE INTERSTATE GUIDE NOW AVAILABLE**

Geo's Cartography Unit recently finished a new, up-to-date Washington State Interstate Guide - which has been printed and is available from the Communications Office. It is a straight line diagram of all of Washington State's Interstate Highways, with interchanges and local services depicted. This product is used by WSDOT employees, the State Patrol, the transport industry, and the general public.

Cartography designed and printed a slightly simplified single color version this time to save on development and printing costs. The resulting savings will allow Cartography to update the guide as needed and to print new versions more frequently. Previous versions were printed in 1986 and 1991. Additional copies have been unavailable for several years. Repeated requests from the State Patrol and the transport industry prompted the production of this new version. Cartography is planning to produce a new version every two years, if funds are available for printing.

### **SETTLED TORT LAWSUITS SAVES DOLLARS**

WSDOT's Risk Management assisted the Attorney General's Office in disposing of ten lawsuits through mediation, trial, or other court action for \$121,500 versus prior amounts of about \$1.6 million. June damage recoveries of \$161,509 brings FY 97 recoveries to \$1,592,634 (\$88,470 of which is for damage to WSDOT vehicles). Additionally, \$248,318 has been recovered for damages to other state agency vehicles.

